



M800 All Automation Mail

M820 Flat-Size Mail

Summary M820 describes the preparation standards for flat-size automation rate First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail.

1.0 BASIC STANDARDS

Standards Flat-size automation rate First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail must be prepared under [M820](#) and the eligibility standards for the rate claimed. Package, sack, and tray preparation are subject to [M010](#), [M020](#), and [M030](#). Trays and sacks must bear the appropriate barcoded container labels under [M032](#).

1.1

Mailings All pieces in a mailing must meet the standards in [C820](#) and must be sorted together to the finest extent required. First-Class Mail and Periodical mailings may include pieces prepared at automation 5-digit, 3-digit, and basic rates, as applicable. Standard Mail mailings may include pieces prepared at automation 3/5 and basic rates. The definitions of a mailing and permissible combinations are in [M011](#).

1.2

Documentation A complete, signed postage statement, using the correct USPS form or an approved facsimile, must accompany each mailing, supported by documentation produced by PAVE-certified (or, except for Periodicals, MAC-certified) software or standardized documentation under [P012](#). Mailers may use a single postage statement and a single documentation report for all rate levels in a single mailing. Documentation of postage is not required if the correct rate is affixed to each piece or if each piece is of identical weight and the pieces are separated by rate when presented for acceptance. Combined mailings of Periodicals publications must also be documented under [M210](#) and [M220](#).

1.3

Marking Except for Periodicals (which require no markings), all automation rate pieces must be marked under [M012](#). Pieces claimed at an automation rate must bear the appropriate class marking and, except as provided in [M012](#), “AUTO.” Pieces not claimed at an automation rate must not bear “AUTO” unless single-piece rate postage is affixed or a corrective single-piece rate marking is applied under [P100](#) or [P600](#).

1.4

Package Preparation Except for First-Class Mail prepared under [3.0](#), all pieces must be prepared in packages. Firm packages must not be included in mailings prepared under [M820](#). Pieces that meet both the size dimensions and the turning ability and deflection standards under [C820.2.0](#) must be prepared in separate packages from pieces that do not meet all of the FSM 881 dimensions and the turning ability and deflection standards (but that do meet the dimensions and other criteria for FSM 1000 processing under [C820.3.0](#)). Each FSM 881 package and each FSM 1000 package must separately meet the package size minimum number of pieces in [M820.2.1](#), [4.1](#), or [5.1](#) as applicable for the class of mail. When the total number of FSM 881 or FSM 1000 pieces for a specific presort destination (e.g., the 5-digit ZIP Code 12345) meets or exceeds the applicable minimum package size, the pieces for that presort destination must be prepared into a package or packages labeled to that presort destination in accordance with the standards for the rate claimed. The physical size of each package for that specific presort destination may contain the exact package minimum, more pieces than the package minimum, or fewer pieces than the package minimum, depending on the size of

1.5



the pieces in the mailing or the total quantity of the pieces to that destination. Rate eligibility is not affected when a physical package for a presort destination contains fewer pieces than the minimum package size for the above reasons, provided the total number of FSM 881 pieces physically packaged for that presort destination or provided the total number of FSM 1000 pieces physically packaged for that presort destination meets or exceeds the rate eligibility package minimum under [E140](#), [E240](#), or [E640](#).

Sack Preparation

1.6

Mailers may combine FSM 881 packages and FSM 1000 packages in the same tray (First-Class Mail) or in the same sack (Standard Mail and Periodicals).

**Exception—
Standard Mail**

1.7

When the size of the pieces in a Standard Mail mailing job enables them to qualify for Standard Mail automation rates as either letters or flats, if part of the job is prepared as palletized flats at automation rates for flats, the remainder may be prepared as palletized flats at Enhanced Carrier Route nonletter rates and nonletter nonautomation rates if the number of nonletter nonautomation rate pieces does not exceed 10% of the total number of pieces in the entire mailing job.

**Exception—
Periodicals
Preparation**

1.8

As a general exception to [4.1a](#), [4.1b](#), and [4.2a](#) through [4.2c](#), Periodicals may be prepared in packages containing fewer than six pieces, and in sacks containing as few as one such package, when the publisher determines that such preparation improves service. These low-volume packages may be placed on 5-digit scheme, 5-digit, 3-digit, and SCF pallets under [M041](#) and [M045](#), or on merged 5-digit scheme, 5-digit scheme, merged 5-digit, 5-digit, 3-digit, and SCF pallets under [M041](#) and either [M920](#), [M930](#), or [M940](#). They may also be placed in merged 5-digit scheme, merged 5-digit, 5-digit, 3-digit, and SCF sacks prepared under [M920](#).

**Required Co-Traying
and Co-Sacking With
Presorted Rate Mail**

1.9

[9-1-01] The following standards apply:

- a. First-Class Mail: Except for mailings prepared under the tray-based preparation option in [3.0](#), if the mailing job contains an automation rate mailing and a Presorted rate mailing and both mailings are reported on the same postage statement, then the mailing job must be prepared under the co-traying standards in [M910](#).
- b. Periodicals:
 - (1) If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing, an automation rate mailing, and a Presorted rate mailing, then it must be prepared under one of the following options: 1) the carrier route mailing must be prepared under [E230](#) and [M220](#) and the automation rate and Presorted rate mailings must be prepared under [M910](#); or 2) all three mailings in the mailing job must be prepared under [M920](#).
 - (2) If the mailing job contains an automation rate mailing and a Presorted rate mailing, then it must be prepared under the co-sacking standards in [M910](#).
 - (3) If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing and an automation rate mailing, then it must be separately sacked under [M220](#) and [M820](#) or prepared using the merged sack option under [M920](#).
- c. Standard Mail:
 - (1) If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing, an automation rate mailing, and a Presorted rate mailing, then it must be prepared under one of the following options: 1) the carrier route mailing must be prepared under [E630](#) and [M620](#) and the automation rate and Presorted rate mailings must be prepared under [M910](#); or 2) all three mailings in the mailing job must be prepared under [M920](#).



- (2) If the mailing job contains only an automation rate mailing and a Presorted rate mailing and both mailings are reported on the same postage statement, then the mailing job must be prepared under the co-sacking standards in [M910](#).
- (3) If the mailing job contains only a carrier route mailing and an automation rate mailing, then it must be separately sacked under [M620](#) and [M820](#) or prepared using the merged sack option under [M920](#).

**Optional Merged
Containerization With
Presorted and Carrier
Route Flats**
1.10

[9-1-01] When the conditions and preparation standards in [M920](#), [M930](#), or [M940](#) are met, 5-digit packages of Presorted, automation, and carrier route rate mail that are part of the same mailing job may be combined on merged 5-digit scheme sacks or pallets and merged 5-digit sacks or pallets. Packages co-sacked or copalletized must be part of the same mailing job and mail class.

**Tray-Based
Preparation**
1.11

For First-Class Mail prepared under the tray-based option in [3.0](#), mailers may not combine FSM 881 and FSM 1000 pieces in the same mailing.

2.0 FIRST-CLASS MAIL—REQUIRED PACKAGE-BASED PREPARATION

Package Preparation
2.1

Package size, preparation sequence, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit: optional, but required for 5-digit rate eligibility (10-piece minimum, fewer not permitted); red Label D or optional endorsement line (OEL).
- b. 3-digit: required (10-piece minimum, fewer not permitted); green Label 3 or OEL.
- c. ADC: required (10-piece minimum, fewer not permitted); pink Label A or OEL.
- d. Mixed ADC: required (no minimum); tan Label MXD or OEL.

Tray Preparation
2.2

Tray size, preparation sequence, and Line 1 labeling:

- a. 5-digit: optional, but required for 5-digit rate eligibility, full trays, no overflow; for Line 1, use 5-digit ZIP Code destination of packages, preceded for military mail by the prefixes under [M032](#).
- b. 3-digit: required full trays, no overflow, except no minimum for required origin 3-digit(s); for Line 1, use [L002](#), Column A.
- c. ADC: required full trays, no overflow; for Line 1, use [L004](#).
- d. Mixed ADC: required (no minimum); for Line 1, use “MXD” followed by the city/state/ZIP of the facility serving the 3-digit ZIP Code of the entry post office, as shown in [L002](#), Column C.

Tray Line 2
2.3

Line 2 labeling:

- a. 5-digit: “FCM FLTS 5D BC.”
- b. 3-digit: “FCM FLTS 3D BC.”
- c. ADC: “FCM FLTS ADC BC.”
- d. Mixed ADC: “FCM FLTS BC WKG.”

3.0 FIRST-CLASS MAIL—OPTIONAL TRAY-BASED PREPARATION

Tray size, preparation sequence, and Line 1 labeling:



- a. 5-digit: optional, but 5-digit trays required for rate eligibility (90-piece minimum, fewer not permitted); one less-than-full or overflow tray allowed; for Line 1, use 5-digit ZIP Code destination of pieces (for military mail see [M031](#)). (Preparation to qualify for 5-digit rate is optional and need not be done for all 5-digit destinations.)
- b. 3-digit: required (90-piece minimum, fewer not permitted); one less-than-full or overflow tray allowed; for Line 1, use [L002](#), Column A for 3-digit destinations.
- c. Origin 3-digit: required for each 3-digit ZIP Code served by the SCF of the origin (verification) office; no minimum; for Line 1, use [L002](#), Column A for 3-digit destinations.
- d. ADC: required (90-piece minimum, fewer not permitted); one less-than-full or overflow tray allowed; group pieces by 3-digit ZIP Code prefix; for Line 1, use [L004](#) (ZIP Code prefixes in Column A must be combined and labeled to the corresponding ADC destination shown in Column B). As an exception, pieces do *not* have to be grouped by 3-digit ZIP Code prefix in ADC trays if the mailing is prepared using a MLOCR/barcode sorter and standardized documentation is submitted.
- e. Mixed ADC: required (no minimum for rate eligibility); group pieces by ADC; for Line 1, use “MXD” followed by the city/state/ZIP of the facility serving the 3-digit ZIP Code of the entry post office, as shown in [L002](#), Column C. As an exception, pieces do *not* have to be grouped by ADCs in mixed ADC trays if the mailing is prepared using a MLOCR/barcode sorter and standardized documentation is submitted.

4.0 PERIODICALS

Package Preparation

4.1

Package size, preparation sequence, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit: required (six-piece minimum, fewer not permitted except under [1.8](#)); red Label D or optional endorsement line (OEL).
- b. 3-digit: required (six-piece minimum, fewer not permitted except under [1.8](#)); green Label 3 or OEL.
- c. ADC: required (six-piece minimum, fewer not permitted); pink Label A or OEL.
- d. Mixed ADC: required (no minimum); tan Label MXD or OEL.

Sack Preparation

4.2

For mailing jobs that also contain a Presorted rate mailing, see [1.9](#) and [M910](#). For other mailing jobs, the following are sack size, preparation sequence, and Line 1 labeling:

- a. 5-digit: required at 24 pieces, optional with one six-piece package minimum except under [1.8](#); for Line 1, use 5-digit ZIP Code destination of packages, preceded for military mail by the prefixes under [M031](#).
- b. 3-digit: required at 24 pieces; optional with one six-piece package minimum except under [1.8](#); for Line 1, use [L002](#), Column A.
- c. SCF: required at 24 pieces (no minimum for required origin/optional entry SCF); optional with one six-piece package minimum except under [1.8](#); for Line 1, use [L002](#), Column C.
- d. ADC: required at 24 pieces, optional with one six-piece package minimum; for Line 1, use [L004](#).



- e. Mixed ADC: required (no minimum); for Line 1, use [L802](#) (mail entered by the mailer at an ASF or BMC) or [L803](#), as appropriate.

Sack Line 2
4.3

Line 2 labeling: "PER" or "NEWS" as applicable, and:

- a. 5-digit: "FLTS 5D BC."
- b. 3-digit: "FLTS 3D BC."
- c. SCF: "FLTS SCF BC."
- d. ADC: "FLTS ADC BC."
- e. Mixed ADC: "FLTS BC WKG."

5.0 STANDARD MAIL

Package Preparation
5.1

Package size, preparation sequence, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit: required (10-piece minimum, fewer not permitted); red Label D or optional endorsement line (OEL).
- b. 3-digit: required (10-piece minimum, fewer not permitted); green Label 3 or OEL.
- c. ADC: required (10-piece minimum, fewer not permitted); pink Label A or OEL.
- d. Mixed ADC: required (no minimum); tan Label MXD or OEL.

Required Sacking
5.2

A sack must be prepared when the quantity of mail for a required presort destination reaches either 125 pieces or 15 pounds of pieces, whichever occurs first, subject to these conditions:

- a. For identical-weight pieces, a single-piece weight of 1.92 ounces (0.12 pound) results in 125 pieces weighing 15 pounds. Identical-weight pieces weighing 1.92 ounces (0.12 pound) or less must be prepared using the 125-piece minimum; those that weigh more must be prepared using the 15-pound minimum.
- b. For nonidentical-weight pieces, mailers must either use the minimum that applies to the average piece weight for the entire mailing (divide the net weight of the mailing by the number of pieces; the resulting average single-piece weight determines whether the 125-piece or 15-pound minimum applies) or sack by the actual piece count or mail weight for each sack, if documentation can be provided with the mailing that shows (specifically for each sack) the number of pieces and their total weight.
- c. Mailers must note on the accompanying postage statement whether they applied the 125-piece ("PCS") or 15-pound ("WT") threshold or the method in [5.2b](#) ("BOTH").

Sack Preparation
5.3

Sack size, preparation sequence, and Line 1 labeling:

- a. 5-digit: required (125-piece/15-pound minimum, smaller volume not permitted); for Line 1, use 5-digit ZIP Code destination of packages, preceded for military mail by the prefixes under [M031](#).
- b. 3-digit: required (125-piece/15-pound minimum, smaller volume not permitted, except no minimum for required origin/optional entry 3-digit(s)); for Line 1, use [L002](#), Column A.
- c. ADC: required (125-piece/15-pound minimum, smaller volume not permitted); for Line 1, use [L004](#).



- d. Mixed ADC: required (no minimum); for Line 1, use [L802](#) (mail entered by the mailer at an ASF or BMC) or [L803](#), as appropriate.

Sack Line 2

5.4

Line 2 labeling:

- a. 5-digit: "STD FLTS 5D BC."
- b. 3-digit: "STD FLTS 3D BC."
- c. ADC: "STD FLTS ADC BC."
- d. Mixed ADC: "STD FLTS BC WKG."